

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

Attorney Docket No.

22789

TO THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS: 02-04-00

Transmitted herewith is a of JERRY E. PIERCE AND BRADLEY E. PIERCE

for METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR OPTIMIZING MARKET ACCESSIBILITY VIA AN ELECTRONIC NETWORK

Enclosed are:

- ☒ Specification [13 pages]
☒ Drawings [2 sheets]
☒ Declaration and Power of Attorney
☒ Statement Claiming Small Entity Status
☒ Assignment and Assignment Recordation Sheet

CLAIMS AS FILED

FOR	NO. FILED	NO. EXTRA	RATE	FEE
Total Claims	15	0	\$9.00	\$0.00
Indep. Claims	3	0	\$39.00	\$0.00
Assignment Recording Fee				\$40.00
Multiple Dependent Claim Fee				\$0.00
Basic Filing Fee				\$345.00
Total Filing Fee				\$385.00

☒ A check in the amount of the Total Filing Fee is enclosed.

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February 3, 2000
Date

I hereby certify this paper or fee is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated below and is addressed to: BOX PATENT APPLICATIONS, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Express Mail No: EL514171729US

Date of Deposit: February 3, 2000

Name: Gilbert Alba

Signature: [Signature]

STATEMENT CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS (37 CFR 1.9(f) & 1.27(c)) -- SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

Docket Number (Optional)
22789

Applicant, Patentee, or Identifier: Jerry E. Pierce and Bradley E. Pierce

Application or Patent No.: To Be Assigned

Filed or Issued: Filed of Even Date Herewith

Title: Method and System for Optimizing Market Accessibility Via an Electronic Network

I hereby state that I am

- ☐ the owner of the small business concern identified below:
☒ an official of the small business concern empowered to act on behalf of the concern identified below:

NAME OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN Woodbine Leasing, Inc.

ADDRESS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN 2413 Forsyth Road Orlando, FL 32807

I hereby state that the above identified small business concern qualifies as a small business concern as defined in 13 CFR Part 121 for purposes of paying reduced fees to the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Questions related to size standards for a small business concern may be directed to: Small Business Administration, Size Standards Staff, 409 Third Street, SW, Washington, DC 20416.

I hereby state that rights under contract or law have been conveyed to and remain with the small business concern identified above with regard to the invention described in:

- ☒ the specification filed herewith with title as listed above.
☐ the application identified above.
☐ the patent identified above.

If the rights held by the above identified small business concern are not exclusive, each individual, concern, or organization having rights in the invention must file separate statements as to their status as small entities, and no rights to the invention are held by any person, other than the inventor, who would not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person made the invention, or by any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d), or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

- Each person, concern, or organization having any rights in the invention is listed below:
☒ No such persons, concerns, or organizations exist.
☐ Each such person, concern, or organization is listed below:

Separate statements are required from each named person, concern, or organization having rights to the invention stating their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

NAME OF PERSON SIGNING Jerry E. Pierce

TITLE OF PERSON IF OTHER THAN OWNER Pres.

ADDRESS OF PERSON SIGNING 2413 Forsyth Road Orlando, FL 32807

SIGNATURE

Jerry E. Pierce

DATE

2/3/00

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR OPTIMIZING MARKET ACCESSIBILITY VIA AN ELECTRONIC NETWORK

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to electronic commerce systems and methods, and, more particularly, to such systems and methods that improve a potential customer's likelihood of reaching a particular electronic commerce site.

Description of Related Art

In electronics communications systems, such as the Internet, it is known to have commercial venues, known as "web sites," or simply "sites," that are hosted by a vendor and typically offer a product or range of products for sale. A potential customer may locate a particular site by any of a number of methods, including entering an exact domain name of the site that is either known in advance or guessed at from a known trademark of the product desired and/or its manufacturer.

Alternatively, a search engine may be used to locate a vendor of the product desired. This method can be, however, singularly unsatisfying, as a search based upon a common word will often yield hundreds of search "hits," most of which turn out to be fruitless owing to facetious or frivolous linkages established by an owner or builder of the site. Ferreting out a useful connection can be extremely time-consuming and frustrating, often leading the user to abandon the search entirely and choose a low-tech purchasing option, or to turn to a site already known just because of ease and familiarity. In either of these cases, a vendor that does not enjoy widespread name recognition from long-term existence or from having spent prodigiously on advertising will likely lose out on a possible sale. In fact, it has been the subject of widespread reports that even a large marketing

budget does not confer immunity from financial woes, as witnessed by the recent spate of falling stock prices in the e-commerce arena among the so-called "dot-com's."

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

5 It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a system and method for increasing the likelihood that a potential customer will locate a vendor via an electronic communications network.

It is an additional object to provide such a system and method for establishing a plurality of interrelated electronic vendor locations that are adapted to be easily identifiable and locatable.

10 It is a further object to provide such a plurality of interrelated electronic vendor locations.

It is another object to provide a system and method of offering for sale a plurality of related products or services.

It is also an object to provide such a system and method the accessibility of which obviates the need for large expenditures on marketing a product or service.

15 These objects and others are attained by the present invention, a system and method for marketing a plurality of products or services. The method comprises the steps of selecting an arbitrary word and appending the arbitrary word to a first and a second product- or service-related word to create a first and a second site name. Each of the first and the second words is descriptive of a product or a service desired to be offered.

20 The method also comprises the step of establishing a first and a second electronic site. Each site is accessible via an electronic communications network, and each site offers at least one product or service describable by one of the first and second words. Next a linkage is created between the

respective site names and the electronic sites. This linkage permits a user to access an electronic site with the use of the respective site name.

The features that characterize the invention, both as to organization and method of operation, together with further objects and advantages thereof, will be better understood from the following description used in conjunction with the accompanying drawing. It is to be expressly understood that the drawing is for the purpose of illustration and description and is not intended as a definition of the limits of the invention. These and other objects attained, and advantages offered, by the present invention will become more fully apparent as the description that now follows is read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of the system of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of the virtual site connectivity.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

A description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be presented with reference to FIGS. 1 and 2.

A schematic diagram of the system **10** of the present invention (FIG. 1) includes a host computer **12** in electronic communication via modem **14** with a network, such as the Internet **16**. The host computer **12** includes a processor **13** in electronic communication with input devices,

which may include devices such as a keyboard **18**, speech recognition hardware and software **19**, and/or a pointing device such as a mouse **20**, and a software package **22** adapted to perform the necessary site-building task.

The host **12** uses the software **22** to build a plurality of interrelated and interconnected sites **31-35** (FIG. 2), all also linked to a central site **30**, on which may be resident service routines **24** for such tasks known in the art as taking orders, processing payment, verifying credit cards, confirming orders, and querying buyers. These routines are not intended to be limiting, and one of skill in the art will recognize additional routines that could be included herein; alternatively, some of these tasks may be performed manually.

The sites **30-35** illustrated in FIG. 2 are representative of but a small portion of the potential and realized embodiments of the invention for ease of visualization. Each of the sites **30-35** contains a so-called "hot link" to all the other sites. In the embodiment illustrated, a central site, "FoodServiceStore.com" **30** comprises the central processing host utilities and also hot links to the other product-specific sites, here shown as "Hotdogworld.com" **31**, "Ovenworld.com" **32**, "Refrigeratorworld.com" **33**, "Freezerworld.com" **34**, and "Fryerworld.com" **35**. As can be seen, all these illustrative satellite sites **31-35** comprise product-specific sites for restaurant equipment, and were created with the software **22** to set up the sites **31-35** and name them, here by appending the arbitrary word "world" to a product-specific word descriptive of the site, e.g., "Refrigeratorworld.com." The sites **31-35** are also registered by name.

Returning to FIG. 1, a potential buyer has a computer system **40**, including a processor **42** in electronic communication with a keyboard **44**, a mouse **46**, a modem **48**, and a display screen **50**.

Other input devices such as touch screens and voice recognition equipment may be used. Alternatively, a potential buyer may utilize a device known in the art as a “personal digital assistant,” or PDA 49, which includes a processor 41, pointing device 43, a touch screen 45, and modem 47. Cellular technology 50 is also being developed in the art that will enable communication with the system of the present invention. The processor 42 has resident thereon software 52 for connecting with the Internet. Once a potential buyer understands that information can be obtained using such equipment 40 connected to the Internet, it becomes a simple matter to try to find sites having information on a desired product or service by appending an arbitrary word, here “world,” to a name of a product or service.

Although the sites 31-35 illustrated herein relate to specific products, it may be seen by one of skill in the art that other product lines and services could be offered. For example, a set of linked sites providing legal services could be envisioned, for example, by appending the arbitrary word “law” to a specialty area, yielding “Divorcelaw.com,” “Securitieslaw.com,” and “Patentlaw.com.” It can be seen that the invention has virtually limitless possibilities in simplifying a user’s search options, saving time and effort.

It should be noted that by “arbitrary word” may be construed any symbol, letter, or sequence of letters, not necessarily a recognized English word, that may or may not comprise a pronounceable syllable or plurality of syllables. For example, the unpronounceable sequence of letters “xyz” may comprise such a “word,” as would be a nonword such as “skool.” A single letter may also be used, for example, a “z” in place of an “s,” such as “toolz.com” or “toyz.com.” Further, an entire phrase could be employed, such as “to go,” as in “pizzatogo.com” or “burgerstogo.com.” Additionally, a

symbol such as “@” might be used, such as in “shop@home.com” or “work@home.com.” One of skill in the art will recognize that it is the concept of appending a symbol, letter, or sequence of letters to a product- or service-related word that is a particular feature of the invention.

It should also be noted that by “appending” may be construed placing the arbitrary “word” as a prefix or as a suffix to the product- or service-related word. In this way one might construct related sites such as “travelamerica.com” or “traveleurope.com.”

Since the product-related sites are also all “hot linked” together, it is also a simple matter to navigate between them. For example, once a user has obtained the desired information on a freezer in site 34, he can scan a list of hotlinks if he needs another piece of equipment, such as an oven, whence he would select site 32, which would navigate him to that site 32.

It may be appreciated by one skilled in the art that additional embodiments may be contemplated, including alternate systems and method for accessing sites with names developed as disclosed herein.

In the foregoing description, certain terms have been used for brevity, clarity, and understanding, but no unnecessary limitations are to be implied therefrom beyond the requirements of the prior art, because such words are used for description purposes herein and are intended to be broadly construed. Moreover, the embodiments of the apparatus illustrated and described herein are by way of example, and the scope of the invention is not limited to the exact details of construction.

Having now described the invention, the construction, the operation and use of preferred embodiment thereof, and the advantageous new and useful results obtained thereby, the new and

useful constructions, and reasonable mechanical equivalents thereof obvious to those skilled in the art, are set forth in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1 **1.** A method of establishing a plurality of interrelated virtual electronic sites for
2 marketing a plurality of products or services, the method comprising the steps of:

3 selecting an arbitrary word;

4 appending the arbitrary word to a first and a second product- or service-related word
5 to create a first and a second site name, each of the first and the second word descriptive of a product
6 or a service desired to be offered;

7 establishing a first and a second electronic site, each site accessible via an electronic
8 communications network, each site offering at least one product or service describable by one of the
9 first and second words; and

10 creating a linkage between the respective site names and the electronic sites to permit
11 a user to access an electronic site with the use of the respective site name.

1 **2.** The method recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

2 establishing a central site accessible via the electronic communications network; and

3 establishing an electronic link from each of the first and the second site to the central

4 site.

1 **3.** The method recited in Claim 2, wherein the central site establishing step comprises
2 setting up a means for at least one of the tasks of taking an order and accepting payment for a product
3 or a service offered on at least one of the first and the second site.

1 **4.** The method recited in Claim 2, wherein the first and the second sites are
2 electronically linked together, for permitting a user to move between the first and the second sites
3 and the central site.

1 **5.** The method recited in Claim 1, wherein the first and the second sites are
2 electronically linked together, for permitting a user to move between the first and the second sites.

1 **6.** A system for establishing a plurality of interrelated virtual electronic sites for
2 marketing a plurality of products or services comprising:

3 a processor;

4 input means and output means having means for connecting with an electronics
5 communications network, the input means and the output means in electronic communication with
6 the processor;

7 software means resident on the processor having:

8 means for receiving from the input means an arbitrary word and a first and a
9 second product- or service-related word, the first and the second word descriptive of a
10 product or service to be offered;

11 means for appending the arbitrary word with the first and the second product-
12 or service-related word to create a first and a second site name;

13 means for establishing a first and a second electronic site, each site offering
14 at least one product or service describable by one of the first and second words, each site
15 accessible via an electronic network; and

16 means for creating a linkage between the respective site names and the
17 electronic sites to permit a user to access an electronic site with the use of the respective site
18 name.

1 7. The system recited in Claim 6, wherein the software further comprises:

2 means for establishing a central site accessible via the electronic communications
3 network; and

4 means for establishing an electronic link from each of the first and the second site to
5 the central site.

1 8. The system recited in Claim 7, wherein the central site establishing means comprises

2 means for taking an order and for accepting payment for a product or a service offered on at least one
3 of the first and the second site.

1 **9.** The system recited in Claim 7, wherein the software means further comprises means
2 for electronically linking the first and the second sites together, for permitting a user to move
3 between the first and the second sites and the central site.

1 **10.** The system recited in Claim 6, wherein the software means further comprises means
2 for electronically linking the first and the second sites together, for permitting a user to move
3 between the first and the second sites.

1 **11.** A method for locating an online vendor of a product or a service comprising the steps
2 of:
3 accessing, via a computer, an electronic network;
4 devising a compound word comprising a first word descriptive of a desired product
5 or a service and an arbitrary word appended thereto;
6 entering the compound word into the network, for attempting to locate an electronic
7 site adapted to offer the desired product or service;
8 viewing, via the computer, a result of the compound word entering step; and
9 if the result comprises a linkage with a site offering the desired product or service,
10 viewing the site.

1 **12.** The method recited in Claim 11, further comprising the steps, following the site-
2 viewing step, of scanning a plurality of product or service descriptions included in the site and
3 purchasing a desired product or service.

1 **13.** The method recited in Claim 11, wherein the site-viewing step further comprises the
2 steps of viewing a linkage to a second site offering a related product or service and selecting the
3 second site to view.

1 **14.** The method recited in Claim 11, further comprising the steps, following the site-
2 viewing step, of:

3 devising a second compound word comprising a second word descriptive of a second
4 desired product or a service and the arbitrary word appended thereto;

5 entering the second compound word into the network, for attempting to locate a
6 second electronic site adapted to offer the second desired product or service;

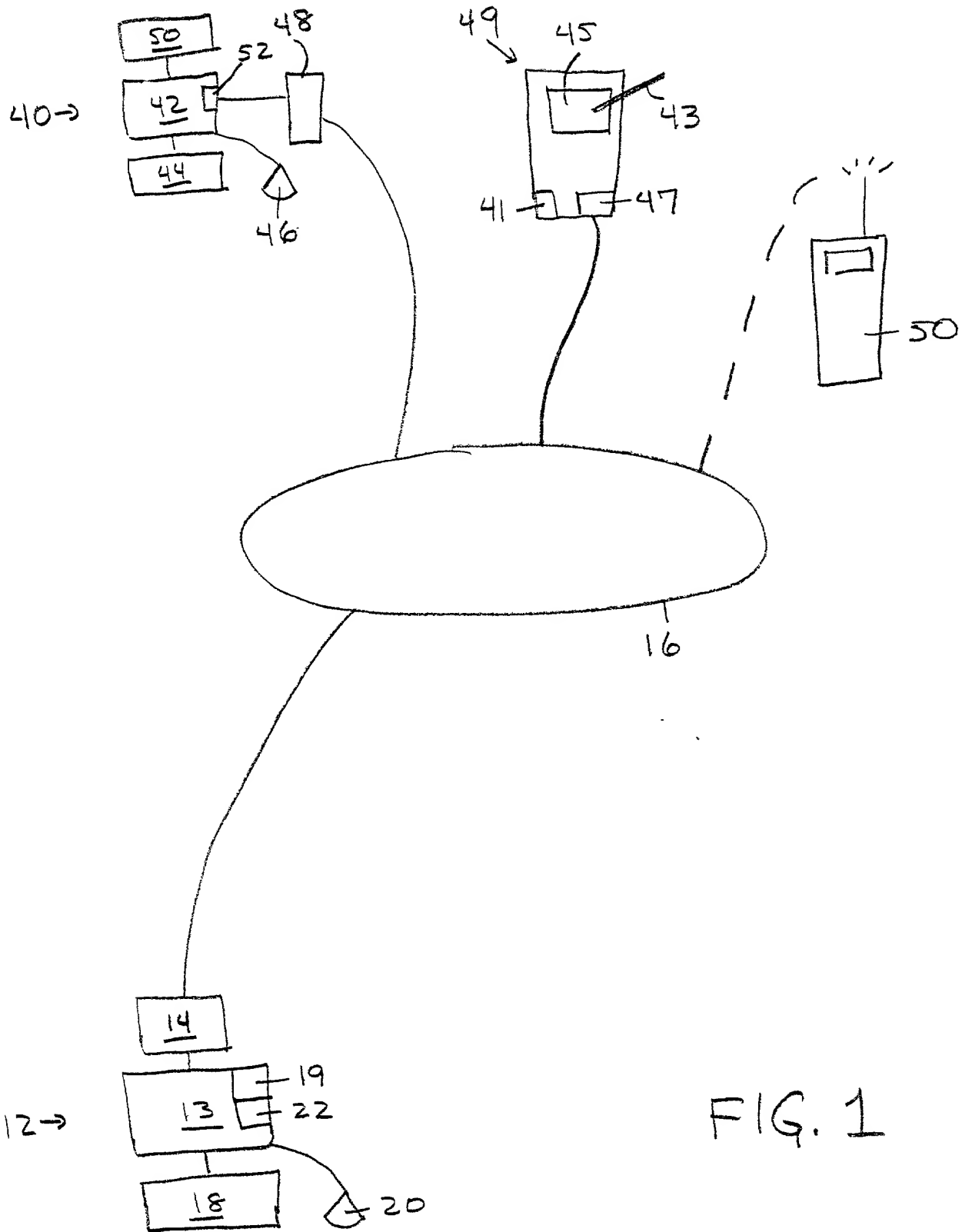
7 viewing, via the computer, a result of the second compound word entering step; and

8 if the result comprises a linkage with a second site offering the second desired product
9 or service, viewing the second site.

1 **15.** The method recited in Claim 14, further comprising the step, following the second
2 site-viewing step, of purchasing the desired product or service.

[illegible]

5



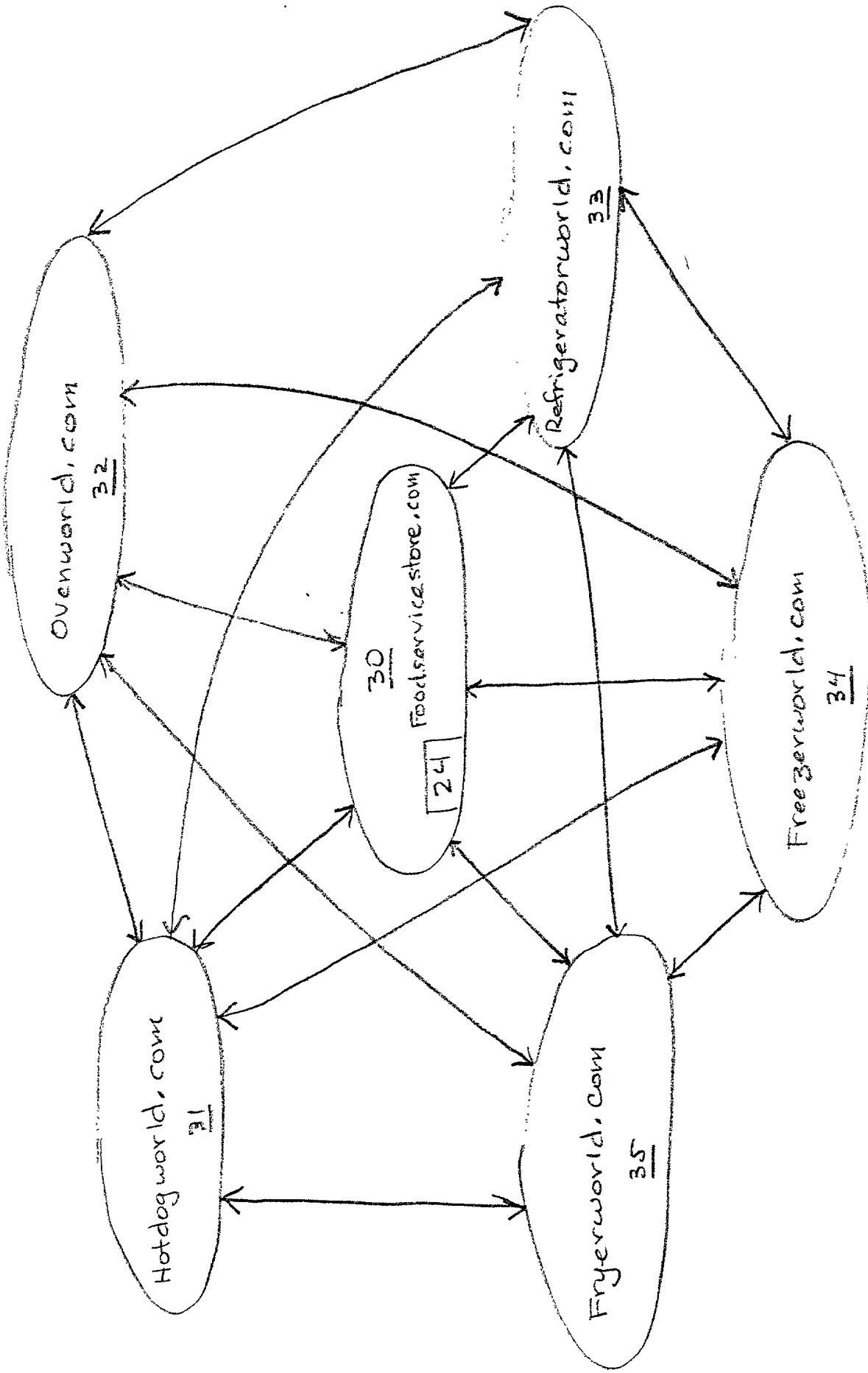


FIG. 2

DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted with Initial Filing <input type="checkbox"/> Declaration Submitted after Initial Filing (surcharge (37 CFR 1.16 (e)) required) OR	Attorney Docket Number	22789
	First Named Inventor	Jerry E. Pierce
	COMPLETE IF KNOWN	
	Application Number	To Be Assigned
	Filing Date	Of Even Date
	Group Art Unit	
Examiner Name		

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

**METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR OPTIMIZING MARKET
ACCESSIBILITY VIA AN ELECTRONIC NETWORK**

(Title of the Invention)

the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto
OR

☐ was filed on (MM/DD/YYYY) _____ as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number
_____ and was amended on (MM/DD/YYYY) _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or of any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application Numbers	Country	Foreign Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Priority Not Claimed	Certified Copy Attached?	
				YES	NO
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Additional foreign application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto:

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number(s)	Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional provisional application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet TPO/SB/02B attached hereto.

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.4 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

DECLARATION — Utility or Design Patent Application

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application.

U.S. Parent Application or PCT Parent Number	Parent Filing Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Parent Patent Number (If applicable)

☐ Additional U.S. or PCT international application numbers are listed on a supplemental priority data sheet PTO/SB/02B attached hereto.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

☐ Customer Number _____
 OR
☒ Registered practitioner(s) name/registration number listed below.

Name	Registration Number	Name	Registration Number
Herbert L. Allen	25,322	Christopher F. Regan	34,906
Carl M. Napolitano	37,405	Jeffrey S. Whittle	36,382
Jacqueline E. Hartt	37,845	Richard K. Warther	32,180
Enrique G. Estévez	37,823	Michael W. Taylor	43,182

☐ Additional registered practitioner(s) named on supplemental Registered Practitioner Information sheet PTO/SB/02C attached hereto.

Direct all correspondence to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Number _____ or Bar Code Label _____	OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence address below
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City/State/Zip	Orlando, Florida 32802-3791	
Country	US	Telephone (407) 841-2330 Fax (407) 841-2343

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Name of Sole or First Inventor		<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor.	
Given Name (first and middle — (if any))		Family Name or Surname	
Jerry E. Pierce			
Inventor's Signature			Date 2/3/00
Residence	Winter Park, FL	Country	US
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City/State/Zip	Winter Park, FL 32789	Country	US

☐ Additional inventors are being named on the _____ supplemental additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto.

DECLARATION	ADDITIONAL INVENTOR(S) Supplemental Sheet
--------------------	--

Name of Additional Joint Inventor, if any:		<input type="checkbox"/> A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor.	
Given Name (first and middle — (if any))		Family Name or Surname	
Bradley E. Pierce			
Inventor's Signature	<i>Bradley E. Pierce</i>	Date	2/3/00
Residence	Casselberry, FL	Country	US
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